

SUPERFUND

Fact Sheet

BUNKER HILL-KELLOGG, IDAHO
SPRING 1999 UPDATE



U.S. ENVIRONMENTAL PROTECTION AGENCY REGION 10

MAY 1999

The rest of 1999 promises to be another active and productive year at Bunker Hill. This fact sheet provides an overview of planned construction activities for this spring and beyond. Work spans a variety of projects, including the Central Impoundment Area (CIA) closure, hillsides planting, and residential yard cleanup.

Yard Cleanups Proceed

Cleanup of residential soils continues to be a priority at Bunker Hill. During the summer of 1999, the Upstream Mining Group estimates it will clean up approximately 200 residential yards and other gravel or soil areas such as driveways and parking areas. In addition, a number of commercial properties are scheduled for cleanup. The group will focus on the community of Pinehurst in 1999 to minimize interference with the Milo Creek project underway in Kellogg and Wardner. **CONTACT: SCOTT PETERSON, (208) 783-5781.**

Milo Creek Project Continues

May 14, 1999 was the second anniversary of the 1997 flooding event that destroyed the old Milo Creek containment system. Between January and April 1999, the Milo Creek Permanent Improvement Project focused on finalizing the "Phase II" plans and specifications in preparation to advertise for bids. The Phase II design covers the remainder of the Milo Creek project. A contract is being awarded which will complete the containment system from the Corduroy Hill Structure outlet in Wardner downstream to the Old Washington School site in Kellogg. This contract covers work on all utilities, drainage, and street repaving. Local storm drainage around the Washington School

structure will be improved so it no longer flows into the old Milo Creek containment system. If project funding permits, construction will continue to the South Fork of the Coeur d'Alene River. Bids were opened on May 4. Construction is expected to begin in late May 1999.

Work on the Milo Creek containment system is especially important as this winter's heavy snow pack is threatening the communities of Wardner and Kellogg. The Milo Creek basin has a snow pack that is well over 150 percent of normal. Both cities have declared emergencies due to the imminent threat of flooding from this melting snow pack. The U.S. Army Corps of Engineers has been asked for Advance Measures Assistance to protect the communities from the flood threat. The Corps is constructing a temporary channel through the lower portion of Wardner and Kellogg to the Coeur d'Alene River. **CONTACT: CAMI GRANDINETTI, (206) 553-8696.**

Blood Lead Screening News

Each year, the Panhandle Health District goes door to door in communities located within the Bunker Hill 21-square mile Box, providing blood lead screening services to children between the ages of nine months and nine years. This year, the screening will begin in July, and results will be available in October. **CONTACT: JERRY COBB (208) 783-0707.**

Hillsides Planting Update

This spring, cleanup crews plan to use helicopters to spread lime over the rest of the Bunker Hill hillsides (approximately 850

acres). Adding lime increases the alkalinity of the soil, creating better conditions for plant growth. Additional tree planting and seeding is scheduled for this fall and into the year 2000. Historically, the hillsides lost trees due to logging and forest fires. Smelter emissions prevented new trees from growing and thriving. New trees and other vegetation will help reduce erosion as well as enhance the natural beauty of the area. *CONTACT: CAMI GRANDINETTI, (206) 553-8696.*

CIA Closure Status

The bid package for the closure of the 260-acre Central Impoundment Area (CIA), the largest waste impoundment area at Bunker Hill, is temporarily postponed pending some minor design and specifications changes. EPA plans to amend the package and award the contract in June. The CIA closure will be a two-year project beginning with placement of clean materials this year, followed by capping in the year 2000. *CONTACT: CAMI GRANDINETTI, (206) 553 8696.*

EPA and Partners Investigate Acid Mine Drainage

In July 1998, EPA initiated a work assignment with CH2M Hill (Hill) to develop options for the long-term management of acid mine drainage from the Bunker Hill mine. The goal is to find ways to enhance and upgrade the current treatment system in order to decrease future acid mine drainage impact on the environment. The treatment system in place now is designed so water flows from the old Bunker Hill mine through underground pipes to be treated at the Central Treatment Plant. From this point, the water is discharged to Bunker Creek and flows into the South Fork of the Coeur d'Alene River. EPA and Hill are investigating in-mine options for reducing the amount of acid mine drainage being produced (e.g., sealing off the worst acid-producing parts of the mine and diverting surface water around the mine). They are also evaluating upgrades of the current Central Treatment

Plant and the water conveyance system from the mine to the treatment plant, and examining the possibility of in-mine sludge disposal. Upgrades to the treatment plant are being evaluated in light of the recently issued draft Total Maximum Daily Load for dissolved cadmium, lead and zinc in surface waters of the South Fork Coeur d'Alene River. EPA is coordinating this effort with the mine owner and the Idaho State Division of Environmental Quality. *CONTACT: MARY KAY VOYTILLA, (206) 553-2712.*

Union Pacific Railroad Update

In 1999, it is anticipated that the Union Pacific Railroad will nearly complete its cleanup obligations under the 1995 Consent Decree for the part of the right-of-way within the 21-square mile Box. However, there may be a couple of areas where contingency plans will be required, and coordination will be needed with the "Rails to Trails" project in other areas of the Coeur d'Alene Basin. *CONTACT: MIKE THOMAS, (208) 373-0318.*

Five-Year Review Details

This year, EPA is conducting a Five-Year Review of the populated areas at Bunker Hill to evaluate the protectiveness of the chosen cleanup remedies. EPA hopes to complete this review by the end of 1999. The Five-Year Review is mandated under the Superfund Program and is the main tool for determining whether selected remedies are protective of human health and the environment. During this review, EPA seeks community input and peer review. Any part of the remedy not found sufficiently protective of human health or the environment will be evaluated for further action.

EPA will use previously gathered information, literature searches, interviews, new sampling events, and potentially a re-evaluation of portions of the risk assessment to coordinate the 1999 Five-Year Review. Some sampling has already occurred in yards, rights-of-way,

and hillside areas as part of this review. Currently, EPA is reviewing data gathered by the State of Idaho for house dust, hillsides, and rights-of-way. Union Pacific Railroad right-of-way samples and residential data provided by the Upstream Mining Group will also be evaluated, once received. EPA and the State are also developing sampling plans for this summer for additional data to be collected. *CONTACT: SEAN SHELDRAKE, (206) 553-1220.*

Operation and Maintenance Activities

As required by Superfund, the State of Idaho has agreed to take on responsibility for the operation and maintenance (O&M) of several major work elements at Bunker Hill. These include operating and maintaining the remedy for the industrial complex closure area, the Smelterville Flats tailings removal project, and the Central Impoundment Area when it is completed. Typical activities associated with O&M are cleaning out sediment basins, repairing and revegetating areas where erosion has occurred, and monitoring the condition of the remedies. The State has been working with EPA to identify the required O&M activities and associated costs for some of these projects. Many of these activities will be closely linked to work that is routinely performed by the cities and Shoshone County. In the coming months, the State will meet with the cities and county to work through resource and logistical issues to identify how they can best work together. *CONTACT: MARY KAY VOYTILLA, (206) 553-1272.*

Please Call the PHD Before You Dig

The Panhandle Health District (PHD) in Kellogg is available to assist people who want to do construction projects involving excavation or grading within the Bunker Hill Box. Under the Institutional Controls Program, by law, a permit is required before you begin your project. Violations can be prosecuted as a misdemeanor in the state of Idaho. If you have questions, call the PHD at (208) 783-0707.

What is the Institutional Controls Program (ICP)?

The Bunker Hill ICP is a locally enforced set of regulations designed to ensure the integrity of clean soil and other protective barriers placed over contaminants left in place throughout the Box. The Panhandle Health District (PHD) adopted this program as part of its Environmental Health Code in February 1995. It consists of permitting and inspection procedures, monitoring, educational efforts, and records maintenance. If you would like to view a video explaining the ICP in further detail, please contact the PHD at (208) 783-0707.

Site History

The Bunker Hill Box spans 21 square miles in the heart of the Silver Valley in northern Idaho. More than 6,000 people live within the Bunker Hill boundaries in the communities of Kellogg, Smelterville, Wardner, Pinehurst, Page, Ross Ranch, Montgomery Gulch and Elizabeth Park.

In 1983, Bunker Hill was added to the National Priorities List (NPL), a list of the nation's most hazardous waste sites. EPA has identified 17 private companies believed to be responsible for site cleanup, some of whom are working in partnership with EPA and the Idaho Division of Environmental Quality (IDEQ) to support cleanup.

Site cleanup began with early public property/park cleanups in 1986 and yard cleanups in 1989. The smelter complex cleanup project began in 1995.

Cleanup decisions are documented in two Records of Decision (RODs). In 1991, the Populated ROD was signed, covering residential and commercial yard cleanup. In 1992, the Non-Populated ROD was signed, documenting cleanup decisions for the rest of Bunker Hill.

How to Get Further Information

For more information about Bunker Hill and access to all related public documents, you can visit the following information repositories:

- Kellogg Public Library: 16 West Market, Kellogg, Idaho 83837
The Kellogg Public Library holds the entire administrative record -- other local libraries have site information, but do not contain all site files).
- Pinehurst/Kingston Library: 107 Main Street, Pinehurst, Idaho 83850
- EPA Region 10 Records Center: 1200 6th Avenue, Seattle, Washington 98101
- EPA Toll Free number (1-800-424-4372)

Please visit or call (208-783-5781) the Superfund Project Office located at 1005 W. McKinley Avenue in Kellogg for information, as well.

Questions or Concerns?

Please call **Jerry Cobb**, Panhandle Health District in Kellogg at (208) 783-0707, **Marianne Deppman**, EPA Community Involvement Coordinator in Seattle, at 1-800-424-4372 or directly at (206) 553-1237, or **Debra Packard**, EPA Community Involvement Coordinator in Seattle, at 1-800-424-4372 or directly at (206) 553-0247.

To ensure effective communication with everyone, additional services can be made available by calling EPA's toll-free number at 1-800-424-4372.

*Web Surfing for EPA Region 10: Check out our homepage at:
<http://www.epa.gov/r10earth>*



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